(d) Various facilities likely to be provided to the passengers in case of delay/cancellation of flights *inter-alia,* include supply of additional foodstuff, mineral water, tea, coffee and beverages, forcasting of Meteorological Information regularly at an interval of six hours, provisions of special counters to disseminate flight information, provision of additional chairs in all the terminals, prompt display of flight delays, positioning of additional personal for toilet cleaning, deployment of additional man power to look after congestion and customs Immigration X-ray machines and security. Besides, Airport Directors of Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Bhubaneshwar and Vadodara have been advised to gear up existing facilities like parking bays, safety services and increased watch hours for air traffic services to handle diverted air traffic from Delhi airport.

Hike in domestic airfares

1385. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether domestic airfares were hiked during early November, 2005 without any reasons or rationale, just to exploit the surge in Diwali demand; and

(b) whether the price of Aviation Turbine Fuel has come down by about 3 per cent in the same period and if so, why the airlines are not passing on the benefit to the customers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Government does not regulate the air fares and airlines are free to determine the same in accordance with their commercial judgement and market forces. However, Indian Airlines/Alliance Air Domestic Rupee Fares were increased by 10% with effect from 18th October, 2005, This was necessitated due to substantial increase in ATF prices by over 39% over the average ATF price of Rs. 27,500/KL in 2004-05. The increase in operating cost of this magnitude could not be absorbed by the Company

and as such domestic rupee fare had to be increased to off set the increase in operating cost. The average price of ATF came down marginally by 2% from Rs. 38,400/KL in October, 2005 to Rs. 37,650/KL in November, 2005.

Recovery of Government dues from private airlines

†1386. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether private airlines operating on domestic routes have to pay certain amounts due to Government;

(b) if so, the number of such airlines along with the amounts due on them and since when; and

(c) the steps taken for the recovery of these dues along with the steps to be taken in future to deposit these dues to various Government authorities at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The normal dues (within credit period of 15 days) outstanding against major private sector airlines *viz.* Jet Airways, Sahara Airlines, Air Deccan, Spice jet and Kingfisher Airlines are Rs. 2959.14 lakhs, 797.72 lakhs, 577.89 lakhs, 62.79 lakhs and 106.66 lakhs, respectively. The over dues (involving a period of 3 months to more than 3 years) against Jet Airways, Sahara Airlines, Air Deccan, Spice Jet, Kingfisher Airlines, East West Airlines, NEPC, Skyline NEPC, Archana Airways, Mesco, Elbee Air, VIF Airways, continental Aviation, and Jagson Airlines are Rs.350 lakhs, 125 lakhs, 1340 lakhs, 0.00 119 lakhs, 1622 lakhs, 354.98 lakhs, 166.10 lakhs, 39.62 lakhs, 306.23 lakhs, 10296 lakhs, 24.79 lakhs, 184 lakhs, and 131.26 lakhs, respectively.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.